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**The Breath in the Winds and Other Sermons.**

By Frederick F. Shannon. New York: Revell, 1918. Pp. 173. \$1.00.

Welcome to another volume of sermons by Dr. Shannon of the Reformed Church-on-the-Heights in Brooklyn. They are full of that distinct quality which we have learned to associate with Dr. Shannon. He has keen and accurate spiritual vision; he expresses his thought in beautiful, forceful English; he has a message for the daily life of men and women. Here are ten sermons, different in character, covering varied aspects of the gospel. The third sermon, "Christ's Mission," is especially forceful and clear. The following is an example of Dr. Shannon's vivid methods:

"When German diggers found a new poem of Sappho in the dust heaps of Oxyrhynchus, an English poetry lover confessed that he was made to leap out of bed for joy. Think of it—a lyric of Sappho raised from the dust! The marvel is that the Lesbian's buried words did not take root and blossom into singing flowers. Now Paul says: 'We are God's poems.' Just as Sappho's golden fragments are an expression of her mind, so are we expressions of God's mind. But we are down in the dust, buried in the Oxyrhynchus of flesh, entombed by sinful habits. Alas! we are poems that have lost their rhythm—we do not go singingly. Who can give us back our song? Who can lift us out of the dust heaps and restore us to our place in the poetry of the universe? Ah, there is but One—no other, now and forevermore—who can accomplish this task. 'For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.'"

Let no preacher attempt, however, to imitate Dr. Shannon. Read him for suggestion and stimulus; then work out your own method and be forever yourself. But read Dr. Shannon.

**The Interpreter.** By Washington Gladden.

Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1918. Pp. ix+268. \$1.50.

Here are fifteen sermons, preached during the latter part of the fruitful ministry of the late pastor of the First Congregational Church in Columbus, if we may judge by the frequent references to national conditions reflected on the pages. There are two controlling themes in the sermons: the Christian interpretation of the individual spirit and the quickening call to the people to realize the social imperatives of the gospel. These, we surmise, were always the mainsprings of Dr. Gladden's ministry in the pulpit. Compared with the sermons of Brooks and Bushnell, these are not great discourses. We hardly think that their author's permanent reputation will be enhanced by them. They are clear in statement; they touch real life; they ought to help anyone to be a braver man and a better Christian. That is probably

the real measure of effective preaching. Such sermons as these could have been the product only of such a soul as Dr. Gladden; it is the preacher who makes the sermon great.

**Higher Living.** By Smith Baker. Boston:

Sherman, French & Co., 1917. Pp. x+404. \$1.75.

The author of this sensible book is a physician who has recorded his reflections upon the meaning of life and pleads for wise and noble use of all the powers of one's being in the high task of living well. He runs through the great aspects of human experience, from birth to death, in thirty concise chapters, full of suggestions that are evidently based upon long experience as a friend and family doctor. There is no foolish sentimentalism in the book; the men and women about whom Dr. Baker talks are human beings like the rest of us; and the life that he describes is something that can be realized while we are studying geometry, washing dishes, or plowing corn. One feels after reading it that life is a fine affair and that there could be nothing better given the average soul as a task than just to live it on the high plane of right reason and deep feeling and spiritual alertness that Dr. Baker describes in such winsome fashion.

**Bugle Rhymes from France.** By Paul Myron.

Chicago: Mid-Nation Publishers, 1918. Pp. 138. \$1.00.

A sheaf of poems and a play, inspired by love for France and America, with occasional pieces of fine feeling and lyric command emerging from a waste of mediocrity. Occasionally a bit is so good that it is too bad that the most is so poor.

**Guiding Boys over Fool Hill.** By A. H.

McKinney. New York: Revell, 1918. Pp. 228. \$1.25.

The writer has a well-known and deserved reputation as an authority on the problems of youth. This book starts with a title that arrests immediate attention. Everyone knows that there is such a hill, and not all of us are at all sure that we are wholly over the top yet. There are ten chapters in the discussion devoted to such practical matters as Self-Consciousness, Day-Dreaming, Doubt, Conscience, and Misunderstanding. The larger part of the material is in the form of illustrations; it would have been better if the signs of the scissors and paste-pot had not been so apparent (for example, pp. 146, 148). One reads some of the incidents with a little choke in his throat at the end; they are on the whole full of reality and reflect the boy as he is. No essential contribution is

made here to our knowledge of the problems of adolescence or their solution; but parents and teachers will be more sympathetic and patient with the real boy by reading the book. And these are the needed qualities after all in those who would help boys over Fool Hill.

**What Think Ye of Christ?** By Charles E. Raven. New York: Macmillan, 1916. Pp. xxx+250. \$1.75.

In an introduction of unusual interest the author tells how the five lectures following it came into being. Out of fierce and fearless discussion in a university group and another experience in a parish, the altogether frank treatment of the Christ emerged. The discussion is touched everywhere by the modern spirit; all conventional terms are avoided as far as possible in the desire to state the truth clearly in modern speech; and the situation in which thoughtful men find themselves is fully and fairly faced. The author believes that, in order to meet the present needs of men, "we must first work to secure the recognition and supremacy of Jesus in ourselves and in our world, and to focus upon him all the energy that is now dissipated over ecclesiastical and doctrinal accretions, over sectarian factiousness and metaphysical refinements." The first lecture handles "Man's Knowledge of God," which is gained supremely in the incarnation. The next two chapters discuss the "oneness" and the "many-sidedness of Jesus" in an excellent way. Then follows a lecture on "The Divinity of Jesus," which may be summed up in this sentence: "In Jesus, in a man upon the earth, is to be found a reproduction of the divine, and as we study and love Him so we shall ourselves become transfigured into the likeness of Him and of the God whose nature He reproduces." This is far away from metaphysical discussion, resting the nature of Jesus in our love and service and making it altogether attractive and reasonable. The final chapter grapples with the subject "Man's Salvation through Jesus." Here is the crux of the whole matter. Put briefly the method is this: Man is hopelessly involved in weakness and sin; he must have something that will literally lift him out of himself; he must attain a new self. Now a man becomes what he loves; and when with all our hearts we love another, we cease to be ourselves; we are taken up into that larger union and made new. This is what Christ does for us. When we love him we merge our life with his and he transforms us into the new and higher life which he shared with God. "It is devotion to Jesus that saves men from themselves and unites them to God." This explanation has none of the legalistic and sacrificial terminology in it; but it is comprehensible and invites one to try it. One can understand how the alchemy of love works; and here it is seen

engaged in the highest achievement in the universe.

The author has a delightful sense of humor and occasionally his turns are delightful, as, for example, at eugenics, "When hygienic cranks beset our infancy and educational experts work havoc with our boyhood." Or, at the church, "It may be that a nurse can soothe her children by telling them that the moon is good to eat, or that it is inhabited by a man and his dog, or even that a cow jumped over it; but if the children believe her and try to fly up to heaven out of the nursery window, they will get a nasty bump from mother earth. Which things are an allegory: our nurse, the church, is at the moment looking anxiously from the window and listening to the moaning of her too credulous charges."

**A Defense of Idealism.** By May Sinclair. New York: Macmillan, 1917. Pp. xvii+355. \$2.00.

It is no easy matter to find one's way through the confused paths of modern philosophical thinking. Nor is this intended as a guidebook. It is avowedly a defense of idealistic monism. The author frankly raises the question whether the book puts in its appearance too late or much too early. In any event, it is an interesting statement. There is a keen appreciation of different writers and schools: for instance, "It is painful to differ from M. Bergson and from William James; but it is dangerous to differ from Mr. Bertrand Russell." In a book of this kind the only question pertinent is, Is the case sustained? The answer is, With excellent skill and force; but it is still dangerous to differ with the New Realism. We found the most interesting chapter to be on "The New Mysticism," which from our point of view has something to affirm concerning the spiritual structure of the universe which no other school of thinking can venture. But that goes back to a difference of opinion on our "knowledge of knowledge," and there is no universal agreement on this matter.

**Stories and Story-Telling in Moral and Religious Education.** By Edward Porter St. John. Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1918. Pp. xii+102. \$0.75.

This little volume, now issued in a second and enlarged edition, is the most complete and satisfactory treatment of the subject to be had in such concise and convenient form. It is indispensable to all workers in moral and religious education. It is adapted to class work or to private reading and study. Next to hearing and seeing a real story-teller in action this book is the most valuable means of preparation for this form of instruction.